(b) IFCI has reported that its operations have recorded a growth rate in sanctions and disbursements during the year 1994-95 of the order of 54.3% and 48.7% respectively on annualised basis over the sanctions and disbursements made during 1993-94 (July-March).

Creation of National Transmission Network for Power

*129. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the power transmission network has not been developed equally as the power generation network/ infrastructure;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have any plans to create a National Transmission Network to ensure dependable transmission, covering the entire country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the total cost involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N. K. P. SALVE): (a) and (b) Appropriate associated transmission links are planned and executed for evacuation of power from the generating stations. Development of infrastructure for transmission of power is an ongoing process and there is always need for augmentation/strengthening of the transmision network.

(c) and (d) Acton has already been initiated for the formation of a National Power Grid involving inter-connection of regional grids to facilitate exchange of power across various regions in the country and to make optimum utilisation of the available generation resources. The details of the Schemes for integrating the Regional Grids into a National Grid are as follows:—

(i) 500 MW HVDC Back to Back transmission link at Vindhyachal connecting Northern and Western Region already exists (approximate cost Rs. 146.33 crores).

(ii) 1000 MW HVDC Back to Back station at Chandrapur connecting Southern and Western Regions is under execution and expected to be commissioned in 1997-98 (Approximate cost Rs. 900.28 crores).

(iii) 500 MW HVDC Back to Back link at Vishakhapatnam connecting Eastern and Southern Regions has also been approved for commissioning during 1998-99 (Approximate cost Rs. 659.98 crores).

(iv) 500 MW HVDC Back to Back Mau-Biharshariff project has also been planned to connect Eastern and Northern Regions for commissioning during 9th Plan (approximate cost Rs. 556.31 crores).

Other major links would be planned alongwith future generating projects.

Prices of Consumer Items

130. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) have the prices of consumer items come down after the presentation of the 1995-96 budget as stated by the Minister of Finance while presenting the budget;

(b) if so, the names of the items whose prices have come down and by how much/to what extent; and

(c) the reasons for the prices not coming down in respect of the remaining

items and what action the Government is taking/contemplating in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Some of the consumer products whose wholesale prices index recorded a fall of more than 5% since the presentation of the 1995-96 Budget are: wheat, atta, gram, copra, eggs, coffee, fruits, rape and mustard oil, fibres and liquid vitamins. Quite a large number of manufactured products such as air-conditioners, organic chemicals, cables, non-ceramic tiles, yarns etc. recorded a price fall ranging between 1% to 10%.

(c) Out of 447 commodities whose wholesale prices are monitored, nearly 108 commodities recorded absolute decline in price since the presentation of the Budget. Besides this, 98 commodities registered no prices change. The overall growth in the wholesale price index during the first quarter, April-June 95 was only 2 per cent as against 4% in the same period of 1994-95 which is indicative of deceleration in the inflation rate. Government remains vigilant and has taken a number of steps to moderate the prices of essential commodities. These are:—

(i) continuation of FCI's open market sale of rice and wheat through current fiscal year to check market price.

(ii) allowing import of edible oils (except coconut oil) under OGL at a reduced duty of 30 per cent.

(iii) importing 1.5 lakh tonnes of palmolein at concessional duty of 20 per cent for supply through PDS.

(iv) continuing OGL import policy for sugar and allowing imports for augmenting PDS stocks.

(v) increase by 5 per cent the levy sugar allocation for PDS.

(vi) import of pulses under OGL with duty reduced to 5 per cent.

(vii) Stock limits for imported essential products waived.

(viii) adjustment in trade and tariff policies in the current financial year to ensure stability in the prices of industrial products. Substantial reduction in excise duties on a number of items is expected to accelerate industrial growth.

(xi) aiming for reduced fiscal deficit to 5.5 per cent of GDP as against 6.7 per cent (Revised Estimates) in the last financial year.

(x) Moderating the growth of money supply.

New Power Plants in Punjab

*131. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up new power plants in Punjab to increase the power generation capacity in that State;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what are the names of the places where such power plants are likely to be set up; and

(d) if the answer to part (a) above be in negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N. K. P. SALVE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The following power projects of the State Government have been accorded techno-economic clearance by the Central Electricity Authority